DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 359 657 EA 025 106

AUTHOR Reynolds, David
TITLE Linking School Effectiveness Knowledge and School Improvement Practice.
PUB DATE Jan 91
NOTE 24p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the International Congress for School Effectiveness and Improvement (4th, Cardiff, Wales, January 1991).
PUB TYPE Viewpoints (Opinion/Position Papers, Essays, etc.) (120) -- Speeches/Conference Papers (150)

EDRS PRICE MF01 Plus Postage. PC Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS *Educational Improvement; *Educational Theories; *Effective Schools Research; Elementary Secondary Education; Foreign Countries; Models; *School Effectiveness; Theory Practice Relationship

ABSTRACT

This paper outlines the reasons for the overall lack of synchronization between school-effectiveness knowledge and school-improvement practice at the international level. It surveys the two communities, attempts to understand the origins and distinctiveness of the two paradigms, and outlines what each community could gain from an appreciation of the other's knowledge base. It concludes with an outline of what changed practice within each of the communities could contribute to satisfaction of the other's knowledge needs. Examples of programs that integrate the two bodies of knowledge, creating a new paradigm, are described: (1) the "Improving the Quality of Education" project at the Cambridge Institute of Education; (2) the series of school-improvement programs run by the Halton Board of Education in Canada; and (3) school-improvement attempts at the University of Wales, College of Cardiff. One table is included. (Contains 42 references.) (LMI)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED359657

LINKING SCHOOL EFFECTIVENESS KNOWLEDGE AND SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PRACTICE

David Reynolds

School of Education

University of Wales College of Cardiff

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☑ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL IN **OTHER THAN PAPER COPY** HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

D. Reynolds

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

EA 025 106

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

If a Martian, that value free creature so beloved of social scientists, were to visit the planet to take a look at its educational arrangements, the most remarkable thing that would probably strike him or her about our educational research and practice would be the lack of mesh between the enterprises of 'school improvement' and 'school effectiveness'. With the exception of North America which now exhibits the beginnings of links between these two disciplines or sub disciplines, in virtually all other societies around the world there are few points of intellectual or practical contact between scholars in the two disciplines. In addition, the take up of school effectiveness knowledge not just directly into the mechanics of school improvement programmes but <u>indirectly</u> into school practice through influence upon the practitioner and policymaker communities is comparatively rare.

This Chapter aims to outline the reasons for this overall lack of synchronisation between school effectiveness knowledge and school improvement practice internationally. It surveys the two communities internationally, attempts to understand the origins and distinctiveness of the different paradigms that inform and guide the two communities, and also attempts to outline what each community could gain from an appreciation of the knowledge base of the other. Crucially, we conclude by outlining what <u>changed</u> practice within each of the effectiveness or improvement communities could hope to contribute to satisfaction of the knowledge needs of the other community. Examples of fruitful intellectual and practical interrelationships between the two bodies of knowledge, which represents in fact a distinctively new paradigm built on the foundations of the existing two, are then given. It is hypothesised that the further linking of these hitherto separate disciplines would advance our knowledge of how to generate high quality schools for children.

<u>An International Survey</u>

We should start by further examining the nature of the inter-relationships between school effectiveness research and school improvement practice internationally. In North America, particularly within the United States, there exists perhaps the closest of the international relationships between school effectiveness and school improvement. Over half of all American school districts are currently running improvement programmes based upon, or linked to, the effective schools knowledge base (General Accounting Office, 1989), although it must be noted that the knowledge base within the improvement programme is likely to be of the earlier simplistic variety of 'five factor' theories developed by Edmonds (1979) and popularised by Lezotte (1989) rather than that more recently developed from a

considerably more advanced research base by researchers like Stringfield and Teddlie (Wimpleberg et al, 1989). In addition in the United States there are the well known demonstration projects which have involved the direct, controlled transfer of research knowledge into school improvement programmes with built in evaluation of outcomes, which have demonstrated enhanced school effectiveness (eg McCormack-Larkin, 1985). In Canada likewise there are programmes which involve the utilisation of school effectiveness knowledge within school improvement programmes (Stoll and Fink, 1989) and the school effectiveness knowledge base has also penetrated many other ongoing improvement projects (see reviews in Sackney, 1985, 1989).

In spite of this evident relationship between the two bodies of knowledge at the level of practice, at the intellectual level of the scholars who contribute to the respective knowledge bases there is rather little relationship or communality of perspective. In part this may be because school improvement scholars have reacted against the simplistic nature of much North American school effectiveness literature, with its focus upon merely the generation of effective academic outcomes, its simple lists of 5, 7 or 9 'factors' which were said to cause schools to be effective and its advocacy of certain school processes as effective within the existing range of school practice rather than the development of ideas in terms of what might be effective within a differently structured system (see Holly, 1990 for a range of these American views). Whatever the precise reasons, school improvement scholars such as Fullan, Hall, Miles, Louis and Joyce, for example, rarely base their school improvement strategies upon the work of school effectiveness researchers, judged by their own writings. Fullan (1991) for example refers to only half a dozen school effectiveness studies from the United States, only one from United Kingdom and to none from any of the other societies like Australia, the Netherlands or New Zealand in which major school effectiveness projects have been carried out. Indeed, much of Fullan's earlier work (eg Fullan, 1985) makes explicit his fundamental disagreements with the usefulness for school improvement of the concentration on formal organisational factors within the school effectiveness research paradigm, and outlines instead his more 'process' orientated approach to understanding schools as organisations. Were we to take Fullan and the other improvement writers noted above, a survey of their bibliographies suggests that only about 2 or 3% of their total references are from writers commonly regarded as writing within the school effectiveness research paradigm. Were we also to take the American school effectiveness research community and look at the nature of their references, probably only about 1% of total references would relate to writers conventionally located within the paradigm of school improvement.

The situation of two separate, discrete bodies of knowledge and two separate research communities that exists in North America is in evidence in most other parts of the world; indeed in certain parts of the world separation is even more in evidence. In the United Kingdom, there has been in existence considerable mutual hostility between those in the school effectiveness and school improvement paradigms, as typified by the numerous celebrations of the views of the critics of the effective schools research such as Cuban and Rowan which are to be found in the writings of the school improvers Hopkins and Holly (Reid et al, 1987). There is little practitioner take up of the knowledge base of school effectiveness (Mortimore, 1991; Reynolds, 1991), little use of the research in school improvement or school development programmes (see review in Hopkins, 1990) and little appreciation or referencing of school effectiveness material in the works of 'school improvers' (and vice versa). The British situation is further explored below.

In other parts of the world the situation is similar to that in Britain and in North America. New Zealand, for example, was the site of pioneering school effectiveness research (Ramsay et al, 1982) but there are no current signs of engagement of this knowledge base with the 'school improvement through decentralisation' paradigm that has existed since the Picot Report in the late 1980s. The Netherlands now has perhaps the world's most extensive research base within the field of school effectiveness (see Creemers and Scheerens, 1989) but there is no evidence of school effectiveness based school improvement programmes, nor of any penetration of school effectiveness research knowledge into schools through the development planning which is now mandatory within Dutch schools. Australia too has a small school effectiveness research base (see Chapman et al, 1989) and indeed some of this knowledge has been linked to school improvement through the school improvement model of Caldwell and Spinks (1988) but again more developmentally orientated material from Australia shows only limited take up of, or reliance on, school effectiveness literature.

Indeed, the Australian school improvement tradition relates primarily to the literature on educational management and administration, itself notable for the absence of linkages with the school effectiveness research base. Only in Israel do we see any systematic application of school effectiveness findings in school improvement programmes. (Bashi et al, 1990).

<u>The School Improvement Paradigm</u>

Underlying the two distinctive bodies of scholarship and the separation of the two groups of scholars are two very distinctive intellectual traditions and histories. School

Table One

Characteristics of Two School Improvement Paradigms

	1960s	1980s
orientation	top down	bottom up
knowledge base	elite knowledge	practitioner knowledge or 'folk lore'
targetting	organisation/curriculum based	process based
outcomes	pupil outcome orientated	school process orientated
goals	outcomes as given	outcomes problematic, to be discussed
focus	school focussed	teacher focussed
methodology of evaluation	'hard' quantitative evaluation	'soft' naturalistic, qualitative evaluation
site	course, outside school	school
focus	part of school	whole school

improvement in the 1960s and 1970s had a number of paradigmatic characteristics, as shown in Table One.

It was linked as an enterprise to a technological view of school improvement, in which innovations were brought to schools from outside of them and then introduced 'top down', in which the innovation was based upon knowledge produced by persons outside the school, in which the focus was the school's formal organisation and curriculum, in which the outcomes were taken as given, in which the school was the focus of the innovation more than the individual practitioner and in which the goals were learning outcomes. The whole improvement edifice was based upon a positivistic, quantitative evaluation of effects.

The world-wide failures of this model of school improvement to generate more than very partial take up by schools of the curricular or organisational innovations (see Reynolds, 1988) became established findings within the educational discourse of the 1970s. Out of the recognition of this failure came, reactively, the new improvement paradigm of the 1980s which is still reflected in much of the writing on school improvement that is current and in evidence today. This new movement has celebrated 'bottom up' school improvement, in which the improvement attempts are 'owned' by those at school level, although outside school consultants or experts would be allowed to put their knowledge forward for possible utilisation. It celebrated the 'lore' or practical knowledge of practitioners rather than the knowledge base of those who had conducted research. It wished to change educational processes, rather than school management or organisational features which it saw as reified constructs. It wanted the outcomes or goals of school improvement programmes to be debated and discussed, rather than accepted as given. Indeed, the process of school development was often seen by school improvers as a process of making value choices explicit rather than implicit, in which the resultant values debate aided the improvement process. The paradigm also wished to operate at the level of practitioners rather than at school level, with a qualitative and naturalistically orientated evaluation of the enterprise being preferred to a quantitative evaluation. The improvement attempt was 'whole school' rather than 'part of school' orientated and it was also school based rather than outside school or course based (this material is developed in Reynolds, 1988).

Lest one think that the above descriptions of the reactive, new improvement paradigm of the 1980s are over simple, are caricatured or are merely the hostile counter reaction of a member of the school effectiveness research community, Hopkins' (1990, pp.185-191) description of the fourteen country International School Improvement Project (ISIP), notes that 'ISIP ... sees the process of setting

goals as part of the improvement process', that 'quality is defined in terms of the teaching and learning process' and that the following list 'captures the spirit that pervades the working methods of ISIP ...

> a concern to generate an understanding of phenomena ..
> a concern to focus upon the meaning human actors give to their actions ..
> a concern to avoid use of numerical data and to substitute verbal accounts wherever possible ..
> a concern to make educational accounts available to participants in the educational process'.

There is little doubt that the reactive nature of the new school improvement paradigm outlined above was deficient in terms of it actually generating school improvement, as some of its proponents began to realise. Hopkins and Holly (in Reid et al, 1987) were already recognising by the late 1980s that although schools should 'own' their improvement attempts, outsiders could perform a valuable function in bringing 'excellent' or 'elite' knowledge to the attention of teachers in the schools. The process orientated 'journey' of school improvement was still stressed, but by the late 1980s the journey was also undertaken in order to enable schools to evaluate their processes and outcomes. Qualitative methodologies were still the approved methodology for the measurement of programme impacts, processes and outcomes, but a rigour shown by a concern to check the validity of findings had appeared in their work.

However, in spite of the signs of intellectual movement by some members of the school improvement paradigm itself noted above, the description of the paradigm in the above paragraphs would not seem to be an unfair description of its 'core' beliefs. Certainly there would be variation between countries, and within countries, in their 'reactiveness' against the old paradigm, with the British sociology of education and teacher researcher movement as the most extreme (Elliott, 1980; Woods and Pollard, 1987), but overall it is clear the paradigm was substantially accepted internationally.

The School Effectiveness Paradigm

The school effectiveness research paradigm has, of course, a very different intellectual history and has exhibited a very different set of core beliefs concerning operationalisation, conceptualisation and measurement by comparison with the approaches of the school improvers. It has been strongly quantitative in orientation with researchers arguing that the dominant, psychologically orientated beliefs in the importance of outside school factors (eg Coleman, 1966; Jencks et al, 1971) had to be destroyed by utilisation of the same paradigm as that

used by the researchers, not from a different more qualitatively orientated one.

Adherents to the paradigm are concerned with pupil outcomes primarily, which is not surprising given the political history of school effectiveness research in the United States, where it has grown on and built on the beliefs of Ron Edmonds and his associates that 'all children can learn'. Processes within schools only have an importance within the school effectiveness paradigm to the extent that they affect outcomes - indeed, one 'back maps' with the paradigm <u>from</u> outcomes <u>to</u> processes. The school effectiveness paradigm furthermore regards pupil and school outcomes as fundamentally unproblematic and as given; indeed, in the great majority of the North American effectiveness research the outcomes used are derived from only the very limited, official educational definitions of the school as a purely academic institution. School effectiveness researchers indeed often talk of a 'good' or 'excellent' school as if the definition of 'good' or 'excellent' is unproblematic. Lastly, the school effectiveness paradigm is organisationally rather than process based in terms of its analytic and descriptive orientation, preferring to restrict itself to the more easily quantifiable or measurable. As an example, Fullan's (1985) process factors such as 'a feel for the process of leadership' or 'a guiding value system', or 'intense interaction and communication' are largely eschewed in favour of organisationally and behaviourally orientated process variables such as 'clear goals and high expectations' and/or 'parental involvement and support'. Additionally, the focus within the school improvement paradigm on the attitudinal, and on personal and group inner states, is replaced within school effectiveness research by a focus on the more easily measured behaviour of persons.

From the outline of the history of the two paradigms above, it can be seen that the two disciplines of school effectiveness and school improvement are 'coming from' very different places intellectually, methodologically and theoretically. The school improvement paradigm was a reactive one from the early 1980s, reacting <u>against</u> the top down imposition of elite defined knowledge in schools <u>towards</u> a celebration of practitioner lore, and an acceptance of the ensuing goals debate rather than an acknowledgement of pre-determined school goals. In this reactive phase, school improvement is very different in its orientations to the school effectiveness paradigm which began to emerge in the early to mid 1980s, with its outcome focus, its quantitative methodology, its concern to generate truthful knowledge about schools (whether practitioners agreed with it or not!) and its concerns with reified school organisations and easily measured behaviours, rather than with the attitudes of teachers and pupils.

There is recent evidence as we noted above that some of those appreciative of aspects of the school improvement tradition have realised the necessity for paradigmatic change within that paradigm, as we noted in the case of Holly and Hopkins. Fullan (1991) too in his more recent writing pays considerably more attention than before to the 'recipes' of school effectiveness knowledge. Some school improvers have now changed even more, and in his more recent writing Hopkins (1990) talks about 'the necessary synthesis between school improvement and effective schools knowledge'.

Some scholars within the school effectiveness community have also argued for the interpenetration and synthesis of both bodies of knowledge in the interests of improving pupil performance and school quality. Mortimore (1991, p. 223) argues for transferring 'the energy, knowledge and skills of school effectiveness research to the study of school improvement'. Elsewhere also I have argued that school improvement attempts need to understand the complex psychological abnormality that is exhibited within ineffective schools (Reynolds, 1992), evidence of which should be taken from the effective schools literature. The mission statement of the journal School Effectiveness and School Improvement (Creemers and Reynolds, 1990) also argued for the still, small voice of empirical rationality being jointly utilised to assess the validity both of existing models of school improvement and the validity of our existing simplistic, factor based theories of school effectiveness. In all these respects the historical divisions between effectiveness and improvement may be considerably diminishing in importance.

What Should School Effectiveness Do To Help School Improvement?

If the two specialties were to form closer relationships there is much ground for believing that they both could contribute greatly to the academic and practical needs of the other. To take school improvement first, the clear need is obviously for school improvers to have knowledge about those factors within schools and within classrooms that may be manipulated or changed to produce higher quality schooling. At the moment, school effectiveness researchers are failing to generate that knowledge that is relevant to the school improvement enterprise in the following specific ways:-

1 There are very few studies at the level of 'case studies' of the effective, or for that matter the ineffective, schools that would show the interrelationships between school process variables and which would paint a picture for practitioners of the fine grained reality of school and classroom processes. The American study by Rosenholtz (1989) and some of the recent 'mixed methodology' work from the 'Louisiana School Effectiveness Study' of

Stringfield and Teddlie (1990) are exceptions to this trend internationally, but in Britain for example we still have no in depth, qualitative portrait of the effective school within the work of Rutter et al (1979) or Mortimore et al (1988).

The explanations for the absence of rich case study data is simple, of course, since school effectiveness researchers have probably feared the identification of schools, which would follow the publication of rich descriptions, when they have customarily promised schools anonymity in the research process. The effect of this absence, though, is to reduce the practitioner relevance of the effectiveness research and to make the transfer of knowledge to the improvement community (with the latter's qualitative orientation) more difficult.

2 School effectiveness studies are deficient at the level of 'processes' rather than factors, since effectiveness researchers have considerably more experience at the level of school organisational factors. School processes defined in terms of attitudes, values, relationships and climate have been neglected therefore, even though the school improvement community needs information on these factors within schools, given their centrality to the process of improvement and development.

3 School effectiveness studies customarily show a 'snapshot' of a school at a point <u>in</u> time, not an evolutionary and moving picture of a school <u>over</u> time, a neglect which hinders the usefulness of the knowledge for purposes of school development. School improvement needs to have ideas about <u>how</u> schools came to be effective (or for that matter ineffective) in order to replicate (or for that matter eradicate) the process, which necessitates a dynamic, evolutionary, evolving and 'change over time' orientation within school effectiveness research.

4 School effectiveness studies from outside North America particularly those from Britain (eg Reynolds et al, 1987; Rutter et al, 1979) neglect the detailed study of the crucial variable of the principal or headteacher. Both these early British studies of school effectiveness, for example, have few 'headteacher variables' because the researchers had to promise their sponsoring educational authorities that they would not concentrate in detail in this area, which in the context of the professional headteacher autonomy prevailing customarily in the 1970s and 1980s was hardly surprising. When the Rutter team later sought to translate their findings about effective school factors into their schools, it is not surprising therefore that their knowledge-deficient improvement

programmes failed to generate much overall improvement in educational processes or pupil outcomes (Maughan et al, 1990).

5 School effectiveness studies have thus far (with the notable exception of work by Coleman and Laroque, 1991) neglected greatly the other educational institutions, arrangements and layers above the level of the school. As Hopkins notes when discussing school improvement conducted within the ISIP model, ' ... much thought ... was given to the way in which improvement policies are established at various levels ... to the structured factors related to support eg. external support. ... Much of the effective schools literature appears to take such meso level issues as unproblematic, yet the ISIP case studies suggest that this is just not so' (Hopkins, 1990, p. 188). School improvement needs clearly to be informed by knowledge as to what conditions <u>outside</u> the level of the school are necessary to generate process and/or outcome improvement - school effectiveness can only generate knowledge about <u>school</u> level variables currently..

6 School effectiveness research, whether of North American, British or Dutch origin, tends towards the generation of lists of organisational process factors within schools that are associated with pupil outcomes, yet of course what school improvers need to know is not what ten, twenty or thirty factors may be useful enhancers of outcomes if changed but which <u>one</u> or <u>two</u> factors should be changed. Given the difficulty of focussing upon large numbers of changes simultaneously and the importance of ordering temporally the change attempts in schools (Hargreaves and Hopkins, 1991), this need for change strategies that relate to a small and discrete number of factors is magnified by the need to alter those variables within schools which are the key determinants of other process variables. No school effectiveness study so far has attempted to isolate the direction and strength of the influences that link school process variables together.

7 School effectiveness research, to compound the difficulties noted above, cannot even prove conclusively which process variables are <u>causes</u> of school effectiveness and which <u>effects</u>. If we take as an example the well established link between teachers' high academic expectations of their pupils and their pupils' good results in examinations or tests of attainment, it may be that the direction of the relationship is a positive one from academic expectations to academic success, or that academic success may by contrast influence academic expectations (since the experience of high examination passes at school level may lead to an

expectation of them continuing), or there may be interactive influences. The directionality of the relationship - crucial for school improvers wishing to decide what to target for improvement - is not established within the research base for this variable and for many other groups or pairs of variables within the school effectiveness knowledge base.

8 School effectiveness knowledge also misses the chance of satisfaction of the needs of the school improvement enterprise by being thoroughly dated. Improvement schemes in the 1990s need to be based on knowledge that is generated from school systems that reflect the characteristics of schools in the 1990s, not the schools of the 1970s and 1980s. At the level of what makes for effective schooling, process factors such as the assertive principal instructional leadership that was associated with effectiveness in the 1980s may not be associated in the same way in the 1990s, when demands for 'ownership' by teachers may have changed the educational cultural context. Outcomes appropriate for measurement in the 1980s such as academic achievement or examination attainment may not be the only ones appropriate to the 1990s, where new goals concerning knowledge of 'how to' learn or knowledge in mastering information technology may be necessary.

Even those process factors associated with effectiveness in the 1970s and 1980s may not be, on their own, sufficient to generate effectiveness in the 1990s. The Headteacher, for example, who was an effective leader in the 1980s now finds a bewildering variety of new aspects to the role in the case of British schools in the 1990s. He/she now has to sell their school as a product, to motivate staff without instrumental rewards, to translate the externally imposed policy agenda into internally driven programmes and to possess psychological resilience in the face of considerable anxiety, uncertainty and concern. The person able to do this in the 1990s may well not be the principal or headteacher described in the school effectiveness research of the 1980s, yet school effectiveness researchers in the 1990s are still operating within a strangely aged paradigm in terms of what school variables, and what dimensions of school variables, to collect data on (for further speculations on this theme see Reynolds, 1992).

9 School effectiveness research has rarely been 'fine grained' enough to provide the school improvement enterprise with the information it needs, since the variation in 'what works' by context has been a focus only of a very limited amount of recent North American work (Hallinger and Murphy, 1986;

Wimpelberg et al, 1989). School improvers need more than the notion of what works across context in the average school, and need more than data upon the relationships between school processes and outcomes for all schools - they need knowledge of the factors that will generate improvement in particular schools in particular socio-economic and cultural contexts. Since only a small amount of our school effectiveness knowledge base is disaggregated and analysed by context, the delineation of the precise variables that school improvement needs to target to affect outcomes is clearly impossible at present.

10 School improvement researchers often find themselves working in historically ineffective educational settings yet the knowledge base within school effectiveness may not be necessarily easily applicable to those settings. Researchers seem to have worked with an implicit, (and in the case of some of the earlier advocates within the school effectiveness movement an explicit), deficit orientation towards the ineffective school, in which it is seen as not possessing the factors that make other schools excel. The possibility, which is my own view (Reynolds, 1992), that the ineffective school may possess variables at the level of interpersonal problems, projections, defences and the like which in turn do not exist in the effective school seems to be rarely considered by researchers. The knowledge of these areas, of these 'ghosts' or 'shadows' on the change process that improvers of the ineffective schools would naturally need, will not be found in a school effectiveness paradigm in which the good practice of effective schools is simply 'back mapped' onto the ineffective schools and then assumed to be sufficient to help the ineffective improve.

What Should School Improvement Do To Help School Effectiveness Research?

At its simplest level, school improvement strategies provide the ultimate test for many of the theories posited within the school effectiveness research enterprise, since the change in school outcomes identified by research as being linked to school processes is the way of testing whether there is a causal link between processes and outcomes. School improvement schemes and strategies based upon the school effectiveness research communities' identified characteristics is therefore of crucial importance to the development of school effectiveness research.

A number of further tasks for school improvement practitioners to facilitate the further development of school effectiveness research also suggest themselves:

1 School improvement studies all too rarely measure the impact of changes in improvement programmes upon the outcomes of pupils or students. Part of the explanation for this may be the historical tendency of school improvement to celebrate certain styles of professional practice because of its association with the training needs and desires of the teaching profession within schools, and part of the explanation may be the reluctance of many within the school improvement paradigm to be explicit about what the nature of the school outcomes or the educational goals of their programmes really are. The absence, though, of this data as to programme effects restricts the ability of those within the school improvement paradigm to help the school effectiveness research base expand in terms of further understanding the possible relationships between school processes and school outcomes.

2 School improvement programmes need to cease their 'grapeshot' or 'multiple factors' based approach to school development and change, since changing more than one school factor at a time (which is what most attempt) makes it impossible for school effectiveness researchers to judge which of the factors concerned may be those factors accounting for any sources of increased pupil outcomes. The school effectiveness knowledge base is again clearly impoverished by an inability to elucidate what, or what not, at the level of the processes of the school has an impact upon outcomes.

3 School improvement programmes need urgently to pay attention to the implications of multi level modelling procedures for their programmes. The evidence from effectiveness research that schools can have differential effects upon their pupils (Nuttall et al, 1989) and that schools effective for some groups of pupils may actually be ineffective for others, has wide ranging implications for school improvement, since these results imply that improvement attempts need urgently to move away from the much vaunted 'whole-school' strategies towards more finely targeted programmes that may vary within the school in terms of their focus and their target group. By focussing improvement at the level of boys/girls, high ability/low ability pupils, and pupils from ethnic minorities/pupils from 'host' cultures it would be possible both for school improvement persons to generate more appropriate school change strategies, but most importantly it would be possible for school improvement to generate evidence about differentially effective school processes as the effects of their change attempts were targetted within schools, an area where school effectiveness knowledge has been historically non existent.

4 School improvement research needs to refocus its activities away from the level of the school to that of the classroom also, if it is to generate the possibility of increased school outcomes and if it is to generate knowledge of use to the school effectiveness research enterprise. A considerable volume of research now exists that shows teachers' focal concerns to be with the content of their curricular and instructional practices rather than with the wider area of the school, yet school improvement rarely has an instructional focus (see for example Fullan, 1991). Without centering itself upon the instructional level, school improvement runs the risk of manipulating variables only at the level of the school, which in most recent research explain much less of the variation in student outcomes than do those variables at the instructional or classroom level (see for a review Creemers, 1992). School improvement also runs the risk of not helping the development of school effectiveness research by not manipulating, and giving information about, the characteristics of the instructional level.

Conclusions

We have seen in this chapter that there are wide divergencies in the orientation, methodology and theoretical approaches of the specialisms historically known as 'school effectiveness' and 'school improvement'. These differences are the result of the historical nature of each group of scholars' and practitioners' development, with school effectiveness researchers desirous of remaining within a positivistic framework to disprove the findings from positivistic educational psychology, and with school improvement practitioners reactively moving to a qualitative, appreciative stance rather than an evaluative one because of the nature of their reaction against the failed improvement paradigm of the 1960s and 1970s. We noted, however, some movement by some members of both groups towards a blending of what had been seen as oppositional approaches.

We have continued by arguing, further, that there is much that school effectiveness researchers can do to develop the school based knowledge base which school improvers need in their possession as they relate to their schools, and we have concluded that there is much that school improvement attempts can do to improve the validity and reliability (and in fact the transferability) of the school effectiveness knowledge base into schools, by means of testing the findings of school effectiveness research and their resulting propositions within schools.

All our discussions so far assume, though, that the intellectual and practical enterprises of 'school improvement' and 'school effectiveness' remain separate, yet that separation in itself may be undesirable, when

compared with the potential benefits for knowledge and practice of an integrated, coherent and co-ordinated intellectual and practical enterprise that would be concerned jointly with research and practice on school effectiveness and school improvement. There are currently a number of examples in embryonic stages of development which show what this integrated enterprise might look like.

Firstly, the 'Improving the Quality of Education' project at the Cambridge Institute of Education (Hopkins, 1992) represents a useful blend of approaches and methods which have until now only been used exclusively in either effectiveness or improvement initiatives. It is pupil outcome orientated, involves measurement of programme success or failure at outcome level but is also concerned with the within-school study of school processes from a qualitative orientation. In the school improvement knowledge base that is to generate and inform practice and professional development, there is space for both the 'elite', research determined knowledge concerning school effectiveness and instructional effectiveness research, and in addition there is space for the results of professional collaboration, reflection and education to influence the chosen improvement strategies in a blend of research and practitioner knowledge.

A second example is the series of school improvement programmes run by the Halton Board of Education in Canada (Stoll and Fink, 1989) noted earlier. These began as an inspired attempt to bring the results of school effectiveness work done within one culture (Mortimore et al, 1988) into the schooling practices of another, but it soon became clear to the programme operators that there were major problems involved in the implementation of the effectiveness programmes that had to be resolved by the adoption at school level of organisational and planning arrangements from the school improvement literature. The result was a blend of the effectiveness knowledge base about effective practices, and the improvement generated knowledge base about successful school based planning and change. There was simply a major philosophical shift that happened within the Halton Board enterprise and a commitment to make the Halton schools more effective for all students through the <u>blended</u> application of school effectiveness and school improvement research.

Our third and final example of a fruitful blending or synthesis of perspectives from what had hitherto been regarded as school 'effectiveness' and school 'improvement' is perhaps our own school improvement attempts at Cardiff (Reynolds, Davie and Phillips, 1989). Our school effectiveness knowledge base, derived from British work on the topic, was blended with grassroots practitioner 'lore' as to what made for effectiveness at school level, and the knowledge base was applied within schools by utilising the improvement methodology characteristic of the 'OD' or 'change agent' variety (eg

Schmuck and Miles, 1971). Our focus was upon changing pupils' school outcomes but we also attempted a full appreciation of the importance of studying school processes as they were changing. The emergent improvement programme was a blend of quantitative and qualitative methodologies, of elite and professional knowledge, of effectiveness and improvement scholarship, and of behavioural, school outcome based approaches together with appreciation of the attitudinal and 'deep structural' components of schools' and teachers' individual and institutional dynamics.

All three examples above represent a blend of what have hitherto been regarded as mutually exclusive orientations, theories and methodologies. All three approaches suspend existing commitments to present disciplinary purity and to the historically constructed bodies of so called 'normal science' and accepted practice, in favour of the adoption of an approach which is problem, pupil and school centred. All three approaches adopt not an 'either' 'or' orientation but are concerned to ensure 'both' school effectiveness 'and' school improvement are joined together in an intellectually creative and practically productive new wave of educational studies. It will be both interesting and instructive to see if further examples can follow.

Bashi, J., Saas, Z., Katzir, R. and Margolin, I. (1990). Effective Schools: From Theory to Practice. Jerusalem : Nevo Publishing.

Caldwell, B. and Spinks, J. (1988). The Self Managing School. Lewes : Falmer Press.

Chapman, J. and Stevens, S. (1989). 'Australia' in Reynolds, D. Creemers, B.P.M. and Peters, T. (eds). School Effectiveness and Improvement. Groningen : RION.

Coleman, J. et al, (1966). Equality of Educational Opportunity. Washington, D.C. : US. Govt. Printing Office.

Coleman, P. and Laroque, L. (1990). Struggling To Be Good Enough. Lewes : Falmer.

Creemers, B. (1992). 'School effectiveness and effective instruction - the need for a further relationship' in Bashi, J. and Saas, Z. School Effectiveness and Improvement, Jerusalem : Hebrew University Press.

Creemers, B. and Scheerens, J. (eds). (1989). 'Developments in school effectiveness research', a special issue of International Journal of Educational Research, Vol. 13, No. 7, pp. 685-825.

Creemers, B. and Reynolds, D. 'School Effectiveness and School Improvement - A Mission Statement' in School Effectiveness and School Improvement, Vol. 1, No. 1, pp. 1-3.

Edmonds, R.R. (1979). 'Effective schools for the urban poor' in Educational Leadership, Vol. 37, No. 15-18, pp. 20-24.

Elliott, J. (1980). 'Implications of classroom research for professional development' in Hoyle, E. and Megarry, J. (eds). World Year-book of Education 1980. London : Kogan Page.

Fullan, M. (1985). 'Change processes and strategies at the local level'. Elementary School Journal, Vol. 85, No. 13, pp.391-421.

Fullan, M. (1991). The New Meaning of Educational Change. London : Cassells.

Hallinger, P. and Murphy, J. (1986). 'The social context of effective schools' in American Journal of Education, Vol. 94, pp.328-355.

General Accounting Office (1989). Effective Schools Programmes - Their Extent and Characteristics. Gaithersberg, MD : General Accounting Office.

Hargreaves, D. and Hopkins, D. (1991). The Empowered School. London : Cassells.

Holly, P.J. (1990). 'Catching the wave of the future : moving beyond school effectiveness by redesigning schools' in School Organisation, Vol.10, No. 2, pp. 195-202.

Hopkins, D. (1990). 'The International School Improvement Project (ISIP) and Effective Schooling : towards a synthesis' in School Organisation, Vol. 10, No. 3, pp. 129-194.

Hopkins, D. (1992). 'School improvement in an era of change' in Ribbins, P. and Whale, E. (eds). The Issue is Quality. London : Cassells (in press).

Jencks, C. et al, (1971). Inequality. London : Allen Lane.

Lezotte, L. (1989). 'School Improvement Based on the Effective Schools Research' in International Journal of Educational Research, Vol. 13, No. 7, pp. 815-25.

McCormack-Larkin, (1985). 'Ingredients of a successful school effectiveness project' in Educational Leadership, March, pp.31-37.

Maughan, B., Ouston, J., Pickles, A. and Rutter, M. (1990). 'Can Schools Change 1 - Outcomes at Six London Secondary Schools' in School Effectiveness and Improvement, Vol. 1, No. 3, pp.188-210.

Mortimore, P. (1991). 'School effectiveness research : which way at the crossroads' in School Effectiveness and School Improvement, Vol. 2, No. 3, pp. 213-229.

Mortimore, P., Sammons, P., Ecob, R., and Stoll, L. (1988). School Matters : The Junior Years. Salisbury : Open Books.

Nuttall, D., Goldstein, H., Prosser, R. and Rasbash, H. (1989). 'Differential school effectiveness' in International Journal of Educational Research, Vol. 13, No. 7, pp. 769-776.

Ramsay, P.D.K., Sneddon, D.G., Grenfell, J. and Ford, I. (1982). 'Successful vs unsuccessful schools : a South Auckland study' in Australia and New Zealand Journal of Sociology, Vol. 19, No. 1.

Reid, K., Hopkins, D. and Holly, P. (1986). Towards The Effective School. Oxford : Blackwell.

Reynolds, D. (1988). 'British school improvement research : the contribution of qualitative studies' in

International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education, Vol. 1, No. 2, pp. 143-154.

Reynolds, D. (1991). 'School effectiveness in secondary schools : research and its policy implications' in Riddell, S. and Brown, S. (eds). School Effectiveness Research, Edinburgh : HMSO.

Reynolds, D. (1992). 'School effectiveness and school improvement in the 1990s' in Reynolds, D. and Cuttance, P. (eds). School Effectiveness. London : Cassells.

Reynolds, D., Creemers, B. and Peters, T. (1989). School Effectiveness and Improvement : Proceedings of the First International Congress, London, 1988. Groningen : University of Gronigen, RION.

Reynolds, D., Davie, R. and Phillips, D. (1989). 'The Cardiff programme - an effective school improvement programme based on school effectiveness research' in Creemers, B.P.M. and Scheerens, J. (eds). Developments in School Effectiveness Research. (Special issue of the International Journal of Educational Research). Vol. 13, No. 7, pp.800-814.

Reynolds, D., Sullivan, M. and Murgatroyd, S.J. (1987). The Comprehensive Experiment. Lewes : Falmer Press.

Rosenholtz, S. (1989). Teachers' Workplace. New York : Longman.

Rutter, M., Maughan, B., Mortimore, P. and Ouston, J. (1979). Fifteen Thousand Hours : Secondary Schools and Their Effects on Children. London : Open Books.

Sackney, L. (1985). 'School district imperatives for effective schools' in The Canadian School Executive, Vol. 16, No. 2, pp. 2-13.

Sackney, L. (1989). 'School effectiveness and improvement : the Canadian scene' in Reynolds, D., Creemers, B. and Peters, T. (eds). School Effectiveness and Improvement. Groningen : RION.

Schmuck, R.R. and Miles, M. (eds). (1971). Organization Development in Schools. Palo Alto, California : National Press Books.

Stoll, L. and Fink, D. (1989). 'An effective schools project : the Halton Approach' in Reynolds, D., Creemers, B. and Peters, T. (eds). School Effectiveness and Improvement. Groningen : University of Groningen.

Stringfield, S. and Teddlie, C. (1990). 'School improvement effects : qualitative and quantitative data from four naturally occurring experiments in Phases 3 and 4 of the Louisiana School Effectiveness Study' in School Effectiveness and School Improvement, Vol. 1, No. 2, pp.139-161.

Wimpelberg, R., Teddlie C. and Stringfield, S. (1989). 'Sensitivity to context : the past and future of effective schools research' in Educational Administration Quarterly, Vol. 25, pp. 82-107.

Woods, P. and Pollard, A. (eds). (1987). Sociology and Teaching : A New Challenge For the Sociology of Education. London : Croom Helm.

dr/ye/reynolds/manu5